



**Pilbara
Community**
LEGAL SERVICE



2025-26

ANNUAL REPORT

Access. Inclusion. Justice. Community.



**Pilbara
Community**
LEGAL SERVICE

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.

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The artwork was designed by a former employee and artist, **Teeka Skeen**, Jaru Kija woman from Halls Creek and Turkey Creek, East Kimberley region, WA.

Teeka's art reflects the journey of Reconciliation 'From the Desert to the Sea' celebrating old ways and new ways. Designed for our RAP, this artwork represents our cultural commitment and guides us to strengthen relationships, respect and opportunities with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the Pilbara.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF COUNTRY

Pilbara Community Legal Service acknowledges the Traditional Owners of Country across the Pilbara, including Ngarluma, Kariyarra, Nyiyaparli and Yindjibarndi peoples, and the many other Traditional Owner groups whose Country we travel through and work on.

We pay our respects to Elders past and present and acknowledge their enduring connection to land, waters, culture and community. We recognise the strength, knowledge and leadership of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and the important role they play in shaping our work.

We also acknowledge the Aboriginal staff, clients, partners and communities who continue to guide, challenge and educate us as we work to improve access to justice and social support across the Pilbara.



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ABOUT

PILBARA COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE

Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc. (PCLS) is a not-for-profit community organisation providing accessible, equitable, responsible and culturally appropriate legal and social support across the Pilbara. From offices in Karratha, Roebourne, South Hedland and Newman, our teams work across one of Australia's largest and most geographically dispersed service regions.

Our model is intentionally holistic. Legal assistance sits alongside tenancy advocacy, housing support, financial counselling, family and domestic violence services, Redress support and settlement services. This means people can receive coordinated support for the overlapping legal, financial, housing, safety and settlement issues that often occur together.



4

REGIONAL OFFICES



830

PEOPLE ASSISTED
ACROSS SERVICES



49.5%

ABORIGINAL CLIENTS



1997

SERVING THE
PILBARA SINCE





VISION, MISSION & VALUES

PILBARA COMMUNITY LEGAL SERVICE

VISION

Access and inclusion to justice and social support for people of the Pilbara.

PURPOSE

Providing inclusive legal and community services to people of the Pilbara in times of need.

OUR APPROACH

We aim to prevent problems escalating by providing early information, advice, advocacy and referral, while supporting clients to build knowledge, confidence and the skills to advocate for themselves.

STRATEGIC PILLARS



PEOPLE
& CULTURE



SERVICE
DELIVERY



GOVERNANCE
& COMPLIANCE



SUSTAINABILITY
& GROWTH



CHAIRPERSON'S REPORT

On behalf of the Board of Pilbara Community Legal Service (PCLS), I am pleased to present the Chairperson's Report for 2025–26.

This year marks an important point in PCLS's journey. As we conclude our current strategic plan, we can reflect with pride on the progress made over the past three years to strengthen governance, build organisational capability and establish a clear direction for the future.

PCLS is today a stronger, more confident and increasingly innovative regional organisation. At the heart of this remains our commitment to providing accessible legal and community services to people across the Pilbara.

Delivering for the Pilbara

Our teams continue to provide legal assistance, financial counselling, tenancy and housing support, family and domestic violence services, redress support and settlement services across Karratha, Roebourne, South Hedland and Newman, together with outreach into smaller and remote communities.

Delivering services across a region as large and diverse as the Pilbara presents significant challenges. Distance, housing costs, workforce availability and the attraction and retention of specialist professionals remain ongoing realities.

Despite these challenges, PCLS continues to respond to emerging community needs. This year included Financial Wellness programs with the First Nations Foundation, the inaugural Bring a Bill Day in Newman and endorsement of our Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan.

Increasingly, PCLS is also working with communities, Aboriginal organisations, government and industry to identify issues earlier, strengthen community capability and address some of the systemic factors contributing to disadvantage.



Strengthening regional collaboration

PCLS continued its role as a founding member of the Regional Alliance of Justice Associations (RAJA), bringing regional organisations together to strengthen collaboration, workforce development, policy engagement and advocacy on regional access to justice.

Regional organisations across Western Australia share many of the same challenges—workforce shortages, higher operating costs, limited specialist services and funding models that do not always recognise the true cost of regional delivery. RAJA provides an important mechanism for regional organisations to maintain their local identity and place-based expertise while developing a stronger collective voice.

For PCLS, this means ensuring the experience and needs of Pilbara communities are represented in broader discussions about access to justice and the future sustainability of regional services.

A new approach to sustainability

One of the most significant strategic achievements of the year was the establishment of Karratha Legal Alliance (KLA).

Last year, I wrote that diversification of funding and exploration of fee-for-service opportunities would form part of PCLS's sustainability strategy. This year, that strategy became a reality.

KLA is a social enterprise legal practice providing professional legal services to individuals, families and businesses, including people who may not qualify for PCLS's free legal assistance. Importantly, profits generated by KLA will be reinvested into PCLS to support free legal and non-legal services across the Pilbara.

*This creates the potential for a **powerful cycle**: people and businesses **purchasing legal services locally** can also contribute to **supporting vulnerable people** elsewhere in our region.*

The early recognition of this model has been encouraging, with Karratha Legal Alliance named a finalist for Legal Innovation of the Year in the 2026 Law Society of Western Australia Awards, alongside PCLS being recognised as a finalist for Community Legal Centre of the Year.

Responding to the funding challenge

While there is much to celebrate, significant challenges remain. Demand for community legal and social support continues to grow, while the cost of delivering services in regional and remote Australia remains high.

Workforce attraction, employee housing, travel and outreach all carry significant costs. In some programs, recruitment difficulties and inadequate funding have required the Board to carefully consider whether services can remain sustainable under existing arrangements.

Responsible governance requires us to advocate strongly for funding that reflects the real cost of regional service delivery while also reducing our reliance on traditional funding sources where we responsibly can. KLA forms part of that strategy, alongside partnerships, collaboration, grants and efficient service models.

Preparing for the next chapter

The Board has continued to strengthen PCLS's governance foundations and maintain oversight of financial, operational and organisational risks. Our attention is now turning to development of the 2027–2030 Strategic Plan, with Board and staff strategic planning scheduled for 2027.

The next strategy provides an opportunity to build on what we have achieved rather than start again. Our focus remains clear: excellent regional service delivery, strong governance, sustainable funding, collaboration, innovation and continuing to evolve in response to the needs of the Pilbara.

None of these achievements happen because of a strategy document or Board decision alone. They happen because people make them happen.

I acknowledge our CEO, Joanna Collins, whose leadership and willingness to challenge conventional approaches have been central to PCLS's progress. I also thank our Executive Team and every member of the PCLS team for their professionalism, adaptability and commitment to the communities we serve.

My thanks also go to my fellow Directors and to our funding partners, Aboriginal organisations, government agencies, community organisations, pro bono partners, volunteers and supporters. PCLS cannot achieve its purpose alone.

As we enter our next chapter, there will undoubtedly be challenges, particularly around funding and workforce sustainability. However, PCLS does so from a position of greater strength. We must continue to innovate where traditional models are not working, collaborate where we can achieve more together and advocate strongly for regional communities.

I am immensely proud of what PCLS and its people have achieved this year and look forward with confidence to what comes next.

Brian Howarth
Chairperson



CEO REPORT

This year has been one of both pressure and progress. Cost-of-living increases, a regional fuel crisis, high travel costs and the ongoing shortage of affordable housing have affected our clients and the way we deliver services. Recruiting and retaining skilled staff in regional and remote communities remains difficult when housing is limited and the cost of living is high.



Against that backdrop, PCLS continued to grow its reach and influence. We strengthened financial wellbeing work in the East Pilbara, including our partnership with First Nations Foundation in Tom Price and Newman and the first Bring a Bill Day in Newman. We established the Newman Power Taskforce after repeated concerns about energy hardship and power supply, creating a forum where local issues could be escalated and practical responses developed.

Our commitment to prevention and early intervention also continued. Love Shouldn't Hurt took our family violence primary prevention work into schools and sector forums. Road Safety Commission funding enabled community education on emerging road safety issues, including new camera technology. Safe at Home commenced in Karratha from 1 July 2026, strengthening our capacity to support women and children to remain safely in their home or a home of their choice.

We also invested in the future of regional legal services. PCLS became a founding member of the Regional Alliance of Justice Associations and hosted the inaugural UWA Legal Education Access Pathways students for four-week regional placements.

*The launch of **Karratha Legal Alliance** - a purpose-led social enterprise law firm connected to PCLS - is a significant step in **diversifying income** and creating **a more sustainable model for access to justice** in the Pilbara.*

Reconciliation remained central to our work. Our Reflect RAP was endorsed and launched, with governance arrangements established to ensure actions are owned, monitored and reported. Across our services, partnerships with Aboriginal corporations and community-controlled organisations continued to shape outreach, Wills clinics, financial wellbeing and family violence responses.

I am proud of what our people have achieved and grateful for the way they have continued to show up for clients, communities and each other. I also acknowledge Principal Solicitor Mark Jeffreys, who was recognised as Regional Practitioner of the Year, and the many staff whose expertise, care and commitment are reflected throughout this report.

Joanna Collins
Chief Executive Officer

PRINCIPAL SOLICITOR'S REPORT

Reflecting on the last 12 months reminds me of the diversity of what has happened at PCLS this year.

On a personal note, I was humbled to be named **Regional Practitioner of the Year**. While I am grateful for the recognition, none of my achievements would have been possible without the sustained support and dedication of the PCLS team working together.

More broadly, our legal and tenancy services continued to expand their capability despite the everyday challenges of delivering services across a remote region. We welcomed two new tenancy advocates, bringing renewed energy to community education and tenancy support. We also welcomed Adam to the legal team, with a strong focus on outreach and regular support to the Hedland office.

Our outreach work continued to take legal services to communities where distance can otherwise be a barrier. We also increased our Wills work in partnership with Aboriginal corporations, supported by Sophie as lead solicitor in this area. During the year, more than 20 simple Wills were completed, with ongoing interest from communities and partner organisations.



**Regional Practitioner
of the Year**

Another highlight was hosting the inaugural cohort of UWA Legal Education Access Pathways students. Anna, Angus and Curie each spent four weeks in the Pilbara, gaining practical experience of regional legal practice. This is an important opportunity to grow the future regional workforce while giving students a real understanding of the professional and community impact of working outside metropolitan areas.

Mark Jeffreys
Principal Solicitor



OUR PILBARA FOOTPRINT

ACCESS TO JUSTICE ACROSS DISTANCE

The Pilbara covers more than 500,000 square kilometres. Distance is not a side issue in service delivery - it shapes the cost, time, workforce planning and partnerships required to make support accessible.

During 2025-26, legal outreach and multidisciplinary engagement took PCLS teams to Port Hedland, Newman, Tom Price, Jigalong, Parnngurr, Wakathuni, Marble Bar and Nullagine, alongside regular work from our four regional offices.

Regional circuit court attendance in Newman supported continuity of representation. Outreach with Curtin University Tax Clinic expanded access to both legal and taxation support for people from Jigalong and Parnngurr, while collaboration with Ashburton Aboriginal Corporation supported engagement in Tom Price.



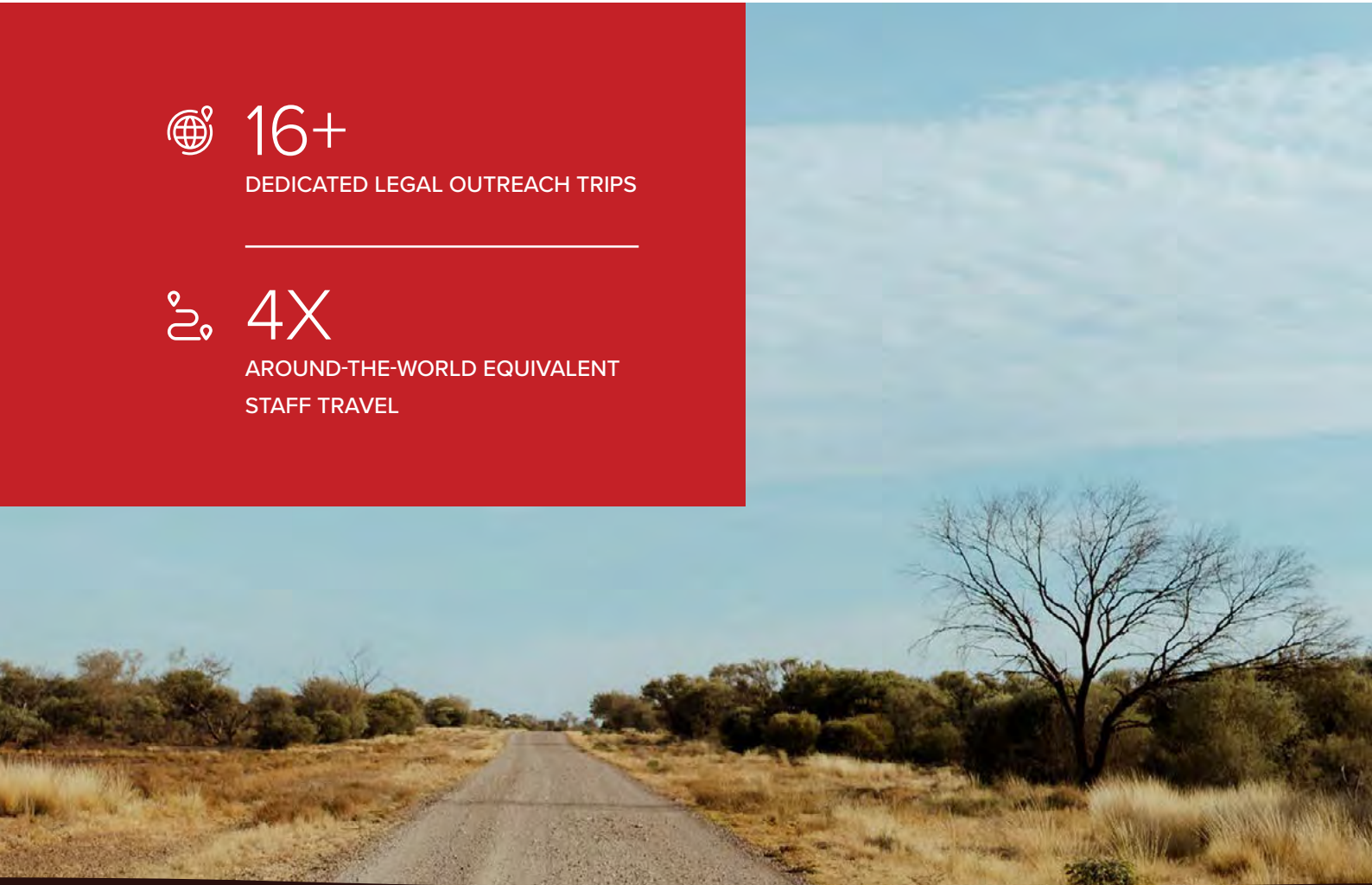
16+

DEDICATED LEGAL OUTREACH TRIPS



4X

AROUND-THE-WORLD EQUIVALENT
STAFF TRAVEL



STRATEGIC PILLAR: PEOPLE & CULTURE

BUILDING A CAPABLE, CONNECTED AND SUSTAINABLE REGIONAL WORKFORCE

People are the foundation of PCLS. In a regional labour market shaped by housing shortages, high living costs and distance, workforce sustainability requires deliberate investment in recruitment, development, wellbeing and career pathways.



1 Cert IV

COMMUNITY SERVICES
COMPLETED

2

TRAINEESHIPS IN BUSINESS
ADMIN AND HUMAN
RESOURCES COMPLETED

2 new

ACCREDITED FINANCIAL
COUNSELLORS

3

UWA LEAP STUDENTS HOSTED

1

NEW TRAINEE
FINANCIAL COUNSELOR



Staff Development Day BBQ

Staff Development Day





*Indigenous Mental Health
Conference – Karla Kelly*

Newman Power Taskforce – Advocacy into Action

Established following PCLS advocacy about persistent energy hardship experienced by Newman residents, the Newman Power Taskforce brought community, industry, government and financial counselling expertise together to pursue practical and systemic solutions.

The Taskforce demonstrates PCLS's role beyond individual service delivery—using the experiences of clients and community to identify systemic issues, convene stakeholders and advocate for change. Initiatives including

Bring a Bill Day, strengthened hardship responses and ongoing engagement with key stakeholders have helped turn local concerns into coordinated action.

BHP



The Newman Power Taskforce and PCLS have been named as **finalists** in the **Pilbara for Purpose Awards** for Social Impact.



Growing capability

Corporate Services supported recruitment, onboarding, workforce planning, performance processes and employee development across legal, housing, financial counselling, family and domestic violence, settlement services and corporate functions. Structured recruitment workflows managed 296 applications across the year.

Two Financial Counsellors, Matilda Chisha and Nadine Hegan, achieved Accredited Financial Counsellor status through Financial Counselling WA after completing the required qualification, practical experience, professional development, supervision and membership requirements. Trainee Jean Nshimiyimana continued his Diploma of Financial Counselling, while Kathryn McDermott commenced her Diploma in April 2026.

Redress Support Worker Helen Mason completed a Certificate IV in Community Services, strengthening the team's trauma-informed support capability. Across the organisation, learning systems covered privacy, cultural awareness, child safety, trauma-informed practice, workplace safety, social media, diversity and inclusion.

Solicitor Adam Hankinson and Sophie Kawadza are both enrolled in post graduate legal studies.



Professional recognition

Sylvia Iradukunda and Sophie Kawadza both unrestricted solicitors successfully completed the Practice Management course. This succession planning for PCLS as both solicitors will now be able to act up as Principal Solicitors, strengthening the governance of our organisation.

Learning from and contributing to the sector

Professional development was strongly connected to practice. Financial Counselling staff attended the FCA "Momentum" Conference in Cairns, including disaster recovery training and the Remote and Regional Forum, where the team shared insights from Pilbara practice. Key themes included trauma-informed and culturally safe practice, insurance and AFCA processes, and collaboration in disaster recovery.

Redress Team Leader Karla Kelly attended the National Indigenous Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Conference in Adelaide, strengthening knowledge of culturally safe, trauma-informed approaches, intergenerational trauma and social and emotional wellbeing frameworks.



*Helen Mason
Cert IV in Community Services*

FDV staff attended the STOP Domestic Violence Conference, developing knowledge in technology-facilitated abuse, coercive control and primary prevention. The Love Shouldn't Hurt program was publicly displayed at the conference, prompting important discussions about embedding violence primary prevention in high school environments. PCLS was honoured to be part of discussions where policy, practice and lived experience intersect. Staff left with new best practice knowledge and a renewed sense of momentum to embed within the broader PCLS team.

Stop DV Conference - Love Shouldn't Hurt



Staff testimonial - DV Conference

Attending the Conference had an immeasurable impact on my development as a social worker. It can be challenging to make time to engage in sector activities when we are busy and focussed on our day-to-day work with clients. It was so valuable to have three whole days of protected time dedicated to think systematically, reflect on my practice and feel part of a united force working to stop violence against women.

PCLS Financial Counselling staff at the FCA Conference in Cairns.



STRATEGIC PILLAR: SERVICE DELIVERY

PRACTICAL, HOLISTIC SUPPORT:
CLOSE TO HOME AND ON COUNTRY

PCLS's service model recognises that legal problems rarely occur in isolation. A person facing family violence may also be dealing with housing insecurity, debt, safety concerns and court processes. A client experiencing financial hardship may need advocacy with utilities, fines, housing and government systems. Our multidisciplinary teams work together to reduce fragmentation and make support easier to access.



830

CLIENTS ASSISTED
ACROSS ALL SERVICES

411

ABORIGINAL CLIENTS

284

LEGAL MATTERS

181

LEGAL MATTERS FINALISED

\$2.88m

FINANCIAL OUTCOMES

\$968,705

NATIONAL REDRESS
OUTCOMES



Legal services: access to justice in practice

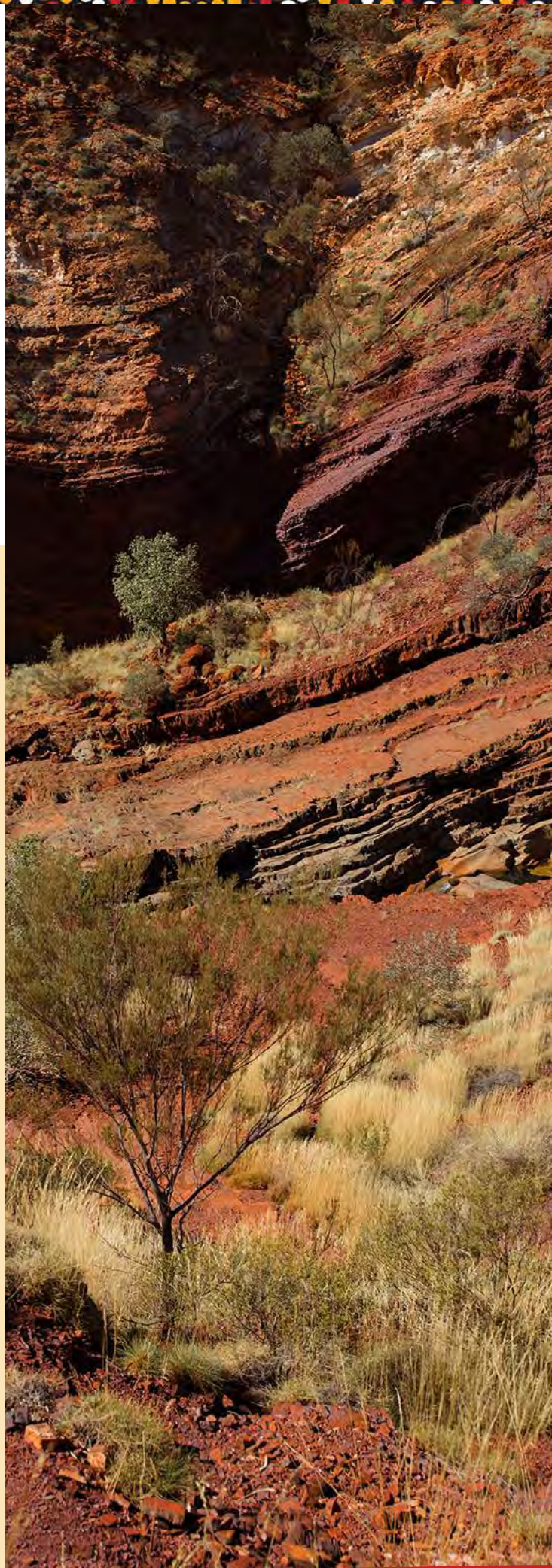
Legal services focused on practical outcomes, strong representation and access for people living across the region. The team supported matters including family law, child protection, criminal injuries compensation, driver licence disqualification, Wills and property settlement.

Client story - urgent recovery order

A survivor of family violence sought urgent assistance after the child in her care was removed from preschool by the child's father following his release from prison. PCLS solicitors drafted and filed an urgent application. The matter was heard that afternoon and a recovery order was made, enabling the child to be safely returned to the mother that evening.

Client story - restoring independence

A local client experiencing financial hardship sought help to remove a driver licence disqualification after an earlier unsuccessful application. PCLS prepared detailed court material, gathered evidence and represented the client through a contested hearing. The Court removed the disqualification, restoring mobility and improving the client's ability to pursue employment.



Wills clinics: planning for the future

PCLS continued to build its Wills work in partnership with Karlka Nyiyaparli RNTBC and other community partners. Clinics were held in Newman, Karratha and Hedland during the year, with attendance generally ranging from eight to 20 people per session.

The clinics make estate planning more accessible and provide a practical opportunity for community members to ask questions about succession, family arrangements and the legal steps involved in preparing a Will.



4

KARLKA WILLS CLINIC
DATES IN 2025-26

Up to 20

PEOPLE TYPICALLY
ATTENDING EACH SESSION

20+

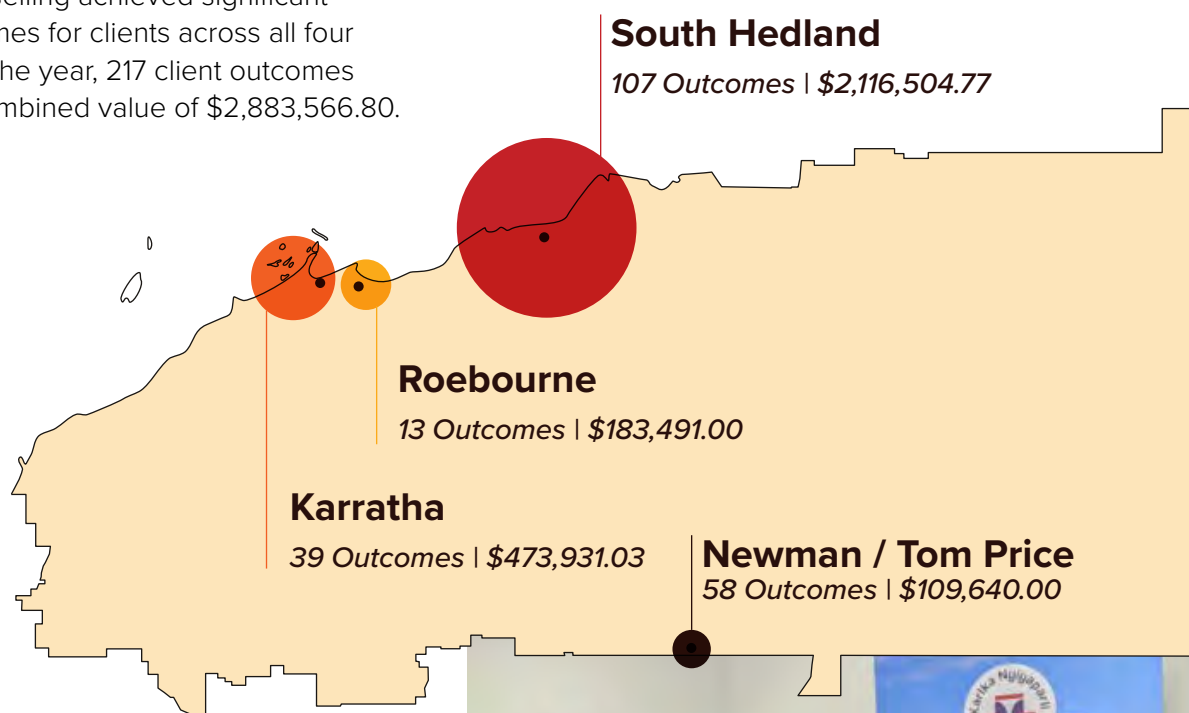
SIMPLE WILLS
COMPLETED



Wills Workshop
Newman

Financial Counselling: measurable relief

Financial Counselling achieved significant practical outcomes for clients across all four offices. During the year, 217 client outcomes generated a combined value of \$2,883,566.80.



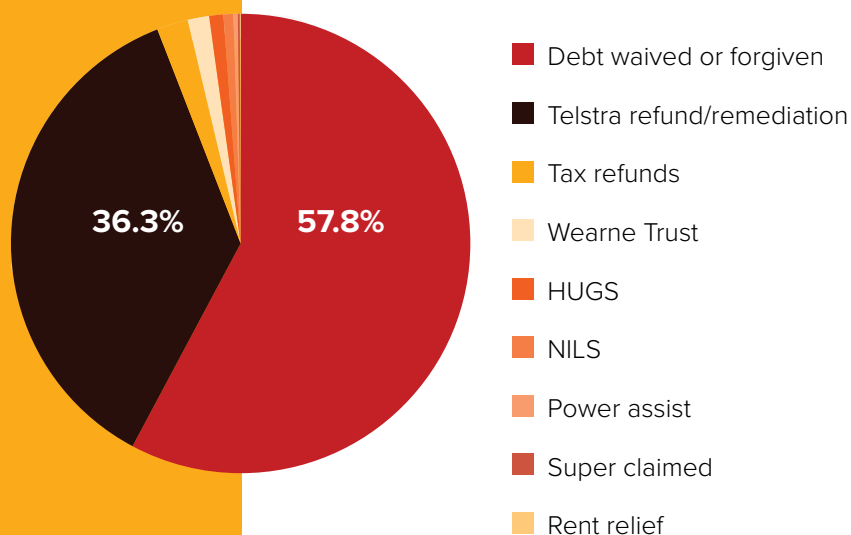
Debt waived or forgiven (\$1.67 million) and Telstra refunds/remediation (\$1.05 million) accounted for the largest share of outcomes. Clients also benefited from tax refunds, HUGS, NILS, Power Assist, Wearne Trust assistance, superannuation claims and rent relief.

Karlka Financial Wellbeing workshop



Impact beyond dollars

The value of financial counselling is not only the amount of debt reduced or money recovered. It is the reduced stress, greater stability and improved ability to make informed decisions that follow when people can understand their options and regain control.



Newman: Bring a Bill Day

On 26 March 2026, PCLS brought 10 external service providers together at Boomerang Oval Sports Pavilion for Newman's first Bring a Bill Day. The event was designed as a practical one-stop model: community members could bring an issue, be triaged once and connect with several services in the same visit.



31

CLIENTS TRIAGED

86

SERVICE INTERACTIONS

10

EXTERNAL
SERVICE PROVIDERS

19

FINES INTERACTIONS

16

CENTRELINK
INTERACTIONS

13

PCLS FINANCIAL
COUNSELLING
INTERACTIONS

The Department of Justice provided on-the-spot assistance with identity document requests, while consultations also highlighted gaps in concession eligibility for people experiencing genuine financial strain. The strong collaborative response helped build momentum for recurring financial wellbeing events with the Shire of East Pilbara and Newman Futures.



Bring a Bill Day, Newman - services brought together in one place to make support easier to access.



Family & Domestic Violence: safety, choice and prevention

The Family and Domestic Violence team continued to support victim-survivors across the Pilbara through person-centred, trauma-informed practice. The team's work spans crisis response, safety planning, advocacy, court support, education, community awareness and prevention.



Client story - supporting a survivor through court

Harper*, a 20-year-old Aboriginal woman, had been with her partner for 2 years. He had been physically and psychologically violent towards her since the beginning of their relationship. Harper knew that her partners behaviour was wrong, and she was unsure about ending the relationship. The FDV Advocate created a safe space where Harper felt comfortable to tell her story and help her make sense of what she was experiencing. The FDV Advocate respected Harpers right to remain in the relationship and continued to provide appropriate information and support. After several months of support, Harper decided she wanted to end the relationship. The FDV Advocate supported her to safely break up with her partner, ensuring she had the correct formal and informal supports in place, and legal protection through an FVRO.

**Alias used.*

PCLS remained active in the Hedland Family Violence Action Group and supported 16 Days in WA initiatives across Karratha, Roebourne, Hedland and Newman. Staff also undertook training in the Centre for Women's Safety and Wellbeing Code of Practice for specialist FDV services.

Staff testimonial - HFVAG

"I enjoy being part of HFVAG because it provides an opportunity to work collaboratively with other local services and community members to raise awareness of family and domestic violence and advocate for positive change in our community. I particularly value being able to contribute directly to initiatives such as the community pop-up stalls and Hedland Says No, as these provide meaningful opportunities to engage with the community, start conversations and promote the message that family and domestic violence is everyone's concern. Through my role with PCLS, I am able to actively participate in and support HFVAG initiatives and contribute to the group's ongoing work within the Hedland community."

Safe at Home - Karratha

In June 2026, the State Government announced the expansion of Safe at Home to Karratha with PCLS. The program commenced from 1 July 2026, strengthening support for women and children to remain safely in their home, or a safe home of their choice, and reducing displacement and homelessness caused by family violence.

Love Shouldn't Hurt: prevention before crisis

Love Shouldn't Hurt is PCLS's violence prevention and respectful relationships education program for young people aged 13-17 in the Pilbara. Developed through consultation with young people, educators, Aboriginal community-controlled organisations, youth services, parents and family violence experts, the program addresses consent, healthy relationships, digital citizenship, peer pressure, boundaries and abuse.

During 2025-26, the program continued to build visibility and sector credibility. It was showcased at the STOP Domestic Violence Conference and supported ongoing conversations with schools and youth-focused organisations about delivery opportunities.

Why prevention matters

PCLS's role is not only to respond after harm occurs. Primary prevention creates opportunities to challenge the drivers of violence early, strengthen respectful relationship skills and support young people to identify unhealthy or controlling behaviour.

Housing Support: preventing homelessness

Housing pressures remained severe across the Pilbara. High rents, limited availability and overcrowding continued to push individuals and families into hidden homelessness and unstable living arrangements.

358

CLIENTS ASSISTED

239

CASE-MANAGED
CLIENTS

119

GENERAL SUPPORT
CLIENTS

87 days

AVERAGE LENGTH
OF SUPPORT

70.2%

FEMALE CLIENTS

\$1,100

APPROX. MEDIAN
WEEKLY RENT FOR A
3-BEDROOM PROPERTY

Housing Client Support Overview 2025 - 26

239

Case Management

119

Generalised
Support

87 days: Average Length of Support

Client Demographics

70.2%

Female

29.8%

Male

42 Years: Average Age





Client story - tenancy sustained

Sally* is a 57-year-old single Aboriginal woman living in social housing who was experiencing significant tenancy difficulties associated with long-term hoarding and squalor. Her circumstances were further complicated by grief and trauma following the death of her mother at the property, as well as concerns about safety, vermin, snakes, the condition of the property and perceived anti-social behaviour in the surrounding area. She was at risk of the eviction process commencing due to the poor condition of the property. Sally had limited financial resources, no savings and undisclosed debts, and required practical assistance with cleaning, waste removal and yard maintenance.

PCLS provided support over a 10-month period, with ongoing assistance available at Sally's request. Support focused on building trust and engagement, improving the property's condition and maintaining her tenancy. Practical assistance included brokerage for backyard slashing, provision of a skip bin for four weeks, and ongoing support to address hoarding and squalor.

The intervention helped prevent further deterioration of Sally's circumstances and reduced the immediate risk of eviction and homelessness. There was progress in addressing the external condition of the property, and Sally demonstrated an increased willingness to engage with support. A significant outcome was the approval of her housing transfer application, providing a pathway toward safer and more suitable accommodation.



During National Homelessness Week, PCLS also partnered with local community services to deliver a community BBQ, raise awareness and connect people with support.



Homeless event in Newman sponsored by BHP (l-R) Nadine Hegan, Shannon Howard, Maxcine Pereira, Densie Donaldson



Homelessness Week – Newman

PCLS joined local organisations, volunteers and community partners to mark National Homelessness Week in Newman, bringing services and the community together for a practical day of support, connection and awareness.

The event attracted more than 100 community members, with people accessing clothing, shoes, blankets and other essential items, while also connecting with local services and support organisations. Representatives

from PCLS, BHP and the Shire of East Pilbara officially welcomed the community, with a BBQ, music and activities creating a relaxed and inclusive atmosphere.

The strong turnout, despite Sorry Business occurring in the community, demonstrated the importance of collaborative, locally based responses to homelessness and housing insecurity. PCLS thanks the organising committee, participating organisations, volunteers and partners who contributed to the event, with stallholders already looking forward to returning next year.

Redress Support: recognition, advocacy and care

PCLS's Redress Team expanded during the year following additional Department of Social Services funding, increasing service accessibility across the Pilbara. The team continued to provide trauma-informed support with National Redress Scheme applications, referrals, advocacy, counselling pathways and outcome processes.

\$968,705

NATIONAL REDRESS
OUTCOMES SECURED

30 Jun 2027

NATIONAL REDRESS
SCHEME CLOSES

Redress – Supporting Survivors

The Redress team continued to provide trauma-informed support and advocacy to survivors navigating the National Redress Scheme, with additional DSS funding enabling the team to expand and increase access across Karratha, Roebourne, South Hedland and Newman.

During the year, the team secured \$968,705 in National Redress Scheme outcomes for clients, providing important recognition and financial redress for survivors.

The team also maintained a strong community presence, participating in NAIDOC activities, Yule River On-Country Bush Meeting, Department of Justice Open Days, Sorry Day, Bring a Bill Day, Homelessness Week, International Women's Day, 16 Days in WA, community BBQs and a range of health, wellbeing and community events across the Pilbara. As the Scheme's closing date approaches, demand has increased. The team has prioritised timely assistance so eligible survivors have every opportunity to lodge complete applications before 30 June 2027.

Client story - sustained support over time

A client who began a National Redress Scheme application independently appointed PCLS as their redress nominee in October 2023. Over approximately two and a half years, the support worker assisted with additional information, liaison, outcome calls and acceptance documentation. In April 2026 the client received a successful outcome including a \$100,000 payment, counselling and psychological care, and the option of a Direct Personal Response.



Settlement Engagement & Transition Support

The SETS Program supported migrants and humanitarian entrants through casework, system navigation, community connection and capacity-building. Staff brought lived experience, cultural knowledge and multilingual skills to their work, helping clients navigate visas, licences, education, employment, healthcare and community participation.



1500+

HARMONY WEEK
PARTICIPANTS

38

CONVERSATIONAL
ENGLISH CLASSES

46

WATER SAFETY
PILOT PARTICIPANTS

10

COMMUNITY
COOKING CLASSES

2

MULTICULTURAL
LUNCHES

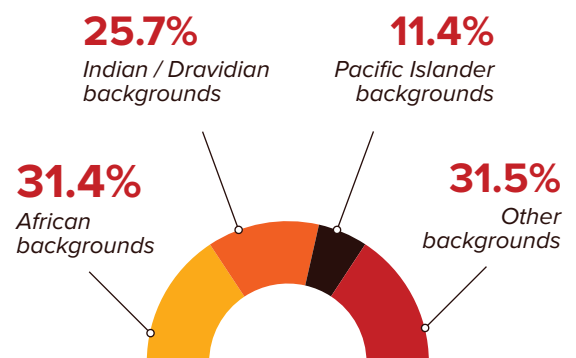
2

CITIZENSHIP
INFORMATION SESSIONS

Multicultural Water Safety: partnership that scales

PCLS's SETS Program partnered with Royal Life Saving WA, local governments and aquatic centres to deliver a Multicultural Water Safety Pilot in Karratha and Newman during Term 1, 2026. The initiative responded to barriers faced by newly arrived migrants and refugees who may have had little exposure to swimming or waterways before arriving in Australia.

46 participants completed the pilot



Client story - independence through settlement support

Max arrived from Ukraine with professional driving experience but limited English and little familiarity with Australian systems. After his overseas licence expired, SETS supported him to understand WA licensing requirements, obtain interpreting assistance and enrol in English study. He successfully gained an Australian driver's licence, restoring independence and improving access to work and community life.

** client name changed*

The positive outcomes contributed to Royal Life Saving WA securing further funding from the City of Karratha and the Shire of East Pilbara to continue and expand the program in 2026-27 - an example of a small partnership initiative developing into a more sustainable regional response.



Fortescue Grants in Action

PCLS was pleased to participate in Fortescue's Grants in Action event, celebrating community initiatives supported through the Fortescue Community and Innovation Grants Program. PCLS gratefully acknowledges Fortescue's longstanding support of Cooking Up a Storm, which has brought communities together through food, cultural exchange and connection since 2016.

Conversational English

SETS delivered 38 conversational English classes across Karratha and South Hedland, providing CaLD residents with an informal and welcoming environment to practise everyday English. The classes supported greater confidence, independence and community participation, complementing formal language education and helping participants navigate everyday life in Australia.

Harmony Week celebrations were delivered through a collaborative partnership between the SETS program, the City of Karratha, the Town of Port Hedland, and the North West Multicultural Association. By combining resources, funding, expertise, and community networks, two large-scale events were held in Hedland on 20 March 2026 and Karratha on 21 March 2026.



STRATEGIC PILLAR:

GOVERNANCE & COMPLIANCE

ACCOUNTABILITY, SAFETY AND
RECONCILIATION EMBEDDED IN PRACTICE



Strong governance underpins safe and effective service delivery. During 2025-26, PCLS continued to strengthen Board reporting, policy implementation, risk management, cybersecurity, records management and work health and safety systems.

11

FLEET VEHICLES
SUPPORTED

42

TRAVEL BOOKINGS
COORDINATED

106

ACCOMMODATION
NIGHTS COORDINATED

Travel coordination supported outreach, stakeholder engagement, training and service delivery activities.

During the reporting period, Corporate Services coordinated:



48

flights



28

travellers

Technology and ICT services continued to support staff across all locations. Based on the available two-month ICT reporting period, an average of approximately 17 ICT support requests were managed each month. Technology infrastructure supported approximately 42 to 43 managed workstations and communications systems across the organisation. Hardware upgrades, workstation improvements and ICT support services strengthened reliability and staff productivity.



Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan

PCLS's Reflect Reconciliation Action Plan covers November 2025 to December 2026 and establishes practical commitments across relationships, respect, opportunities and governance. The RAP was formally launched in May 2026, supported by a staff session and new RAP polos.



A governance structure was established to keep implementation active rather than symbolic. Custodians were assigned to each pillar, RAP progress became a standing item at staff meetings, and a dedicated monthly RAP meeting was established to break larger commitments into manageable actions with clear responsibility.



Reconciliation in practice

The RAP builds on the relationships already central to PCLS service delivery - including partnerships with Aboriginal corporations, remote outreach, Wills clinics, financial wellbeing initiatives and culturally informed family violence and Redress support.





Governance, risk and digital security

Corporate Services continued to support Board reporting, financial oversight, policy implementation, internal controls, audit processes and compliance monitoring. Workplace health and safety systems supported the identification and follow-up of psychosocial risks, client-related safety concerns, fleet incidents, injuries and facilities hazards.

Cybersecurity and information governance were strengthened through managed endpoint protection, ongoing security monitoring and dedicated cyber insurance coverage. Records management work continued through document reviews, information management initiatives and preparations for further SharePoint improvements.

Digital transformation also improved access and consistency. An online referral system was implemented through the PCLS website, replacing paper-based referral processes, while internal forms and workflows continued to move toward digital systems.



Governance transition

PCLS continued work on its future governance structure, including planning for transition to a Company Limited by Guarantee and was registered by ASIC on 6 July 2026



STRATEGIC PILLAR:

SUSTAINABILITY & GROWTH

BUILDING NEW MODELS, PARTNERSHIPS AND
SYSTEMS FOR REGIONAL ACCESS TO JUSTICE

Sustainability in the Pilbara is about more than funding. It is about workforce, housing, infrastructure, partnerships, service models and the ability to adapt when regional conditions change. In 2025-26 PCLS continued to invest in each of these areas.



1

NEW SOCIAL ENTERPRISE LAW FIRM

1

REGIONAL JUSTICE ALLIANCE FOUNDED

4

OFFICES SUPPORTED THROUGH
SHARED SYSTEMS

Karratha Legal Alliance: legal services with purpose

In 2026, PCLS launched Karratha Legal Alliance (KLA), a social enterprise law firm created for the Pilbara. The model provides high-quality paid legal services to individuals and businesses while directing profits back to PCLS to strengthen free legal assistance and community support for people who cannot afford private services.

KLA operates under the same Board of Directors as PCLS and is designed to stay closely aligned with the purpose of improving access to justice in regional Western Australia. The model creates a bridge between people who need affordable private legal services and vulnerable community members who rely on free legal and social support.



Why it matters

Every client who chooses Karratha Legal Alliance contributes to a broader social impact. This is a different way of thinking about the sustainability of community legal services: commercial activity supporting community benefit.

Recognition after year end

Karratha Legal Alliance was named a finalist for the 2026 WA Legal Innovation of the Year Award. PCLS was also recognised as a finalist in the Community Legal Centre / not-for-profit community law category, reflecting the organisation's wider contribution to access to justice.

Karratha Legal Alliance – A Sustainable Model for Access to Justice

The establishment of Karratha Legal Alliance (KLA) marked a significant step in PCLS's sustainability strategy. Developed as a social enterprise legal practice, KLA provides fee-for-service legal services while creating a new revenue stream to support PCLS's charitable purpose.

The model demonstrates how a regional Community Legal Centre can diversify income while responding to gaps in local legal services. Its innovative approach has also received sector recognition, with KLA named a 2026 Law Society Awards finalist for Legal Innovation of the Year.

Finalist



Pilbara Community Legal Service & Karratha Legal Alliance

Nerys Lloyd

Legal Innovation of the Year



The social enterprise will be led by newly appointed Principal Solicitor, Nerys Lloyd, who brings extensive experience and a strong commitment to community-focused legal practice.



"This is about rethinking how legal services can work for regional communities," said Ms Lloyd. "We're creating a model where high-quality, affordable legal support is accessible, and where every dollar of profit goes straight back into helping those who need it most."

**KARRATHA
LEGAL
ALLIANCE**

Regional Alliance of Justice Associations (RAJA)

PCLS continued to strengthen its role in regional access to justice as a founding member of the Regional Alliance of Justice Associations (RAJA). RAJA brings regional Community Legal Centres together to address shared challenges including workforce sustainability, service accessibility and the realities of delivering legal services across regional and remote Western Australia.

A key initiative was the Legal Education Access Pathways (LEAP) pilot, developed through RAJA as a workforce sustainability initiative connecting law students with regional Community Legal Centres. PCLS hosted three UWA law students — Anna, Angus and Curie — for four-week placements across Karratha, Roebourne and Hedland, providing direct experience of regional community legal practice. The pilot showed strong early results, with most participating students reporting increased interest in regional legal careers. For PCLS, LEAP represents a practical investment in developing the future regional legal workforce and strengthening the long-term sustainability of access to justice in the Pilbara.



Leap Project

Workforce meets access to justice

Regional legal services need more than short-term recruitment. Initiatives such as LEAP expose future lawyers to the breadth, responsibility and community impact of regional practice and can help change where graduates imagine building their careers.



- **Joanna Collins** – Pilbara Community Legal Service Inc.
- **Brodie Lewis** – Great Southern Community Legal Services
- **Matthew Panayi** – Kimberley Community Legal Services Inc.
- **David Couri** – Marninwarntikura Women's Resource Centre
- **M Bromberg** – UWA Law School
- **Kirsten Pitt-Nash** (Shearn) - TRIBED Consulting



ADVOCACY FEATURE:

NEWMAN POWER TASKFORCE

TURNING INDIVIDUAL HARDSHIP INTO SYSTEM-LEVEL ACTION

Financial Counselling work in Newman increasingly highlighted the impact of power costs, hardship settings and service gaps on local households. Rather than treating each case as an isolated problem, PCLS used what clients were experiencing to advocate for a coordinated response.

The Newman Power Taskforce was established in 2025 to bring together key stakeholders and keep local energy hardship on the agenda. PCLS convened and chaired the forum, with support from BHP and Creating Communities, and used the taskforce to connect community experience with decision-makers.

- ✔ Raised concerns about energy affordability, concession eligibility and hardship pathways.
- ✔ Supported development and review of hardship responses and clearer customer information.
- ✔ Created a forum for government, industry and community stakeholders to work through practical barriers.
- ✔ Helped connect energy hardship advocacy with broader financial wellbeing initiatives, including Bring a Bill Day.
- ✔ Maintained focus on place-based solutions for Newman rather than assuming metropolitan systems work the same way in a remote mining town.



Social impact recognition

The Newman Power Taskforce has been named a finalist in the 2026 Pilbara for Purpose Awards - Social Impact category.



EVENTS, COMMUNITY & CONNECTION

Moments that brought people together

- Harmony Week celebrations in Hedland and Karratha, with more than 1,500 community members participating.
- Elders Birthday celebrations across the Pilbara on 1 July, recognising Elders' leadership, wisdom and cultural knowledge.
- NAIDOC events in Karratha and Hedland, alongside internal staff activities linked to the Reflect RAP.
- Yule River On Country Bush Meeting and other community engagement opportunities led by Aboriginal communities.



- National Homelessness Week community event and service connections.
- 16 Days in WA activities across Karratha, Roebourne, Hedland and Newman.
- Financial Counselling Australia conference in Cairns and National Indigenous Mental Health and Suicide Prevention Conference in Adelaide.
- STOP Domestic Violence Conference, where Love Shouldn't Hurt was displayed and discussed with practitioners from across Australia.



Financial Wellness Outreach – East Pilbara

PCLS partnered with the First Nations Foundation to bring Financial Wellness Outreach to Tom Price and Newman, connecting First Nations community members with financial services and support face-to-face in their own communities.

The outreach brought together PCLS financial counsellors with banks, superannuation funds, government agencies and financial services organisations, providing culturally safe access to money health checks, superannuation and unclaimed money, banking support, financial counselling and government services. For regional and remote communities, where distance, digital exclusion and access to identification can create significant barriers, the initiative demonstrated the value of bringing trusted services directly to community.



Acknowledgement

PCLS acknowledges the First Nations Foundation, Ashburton Aboriginal Corporation, Newman Futures, Shire of East Pilbara and participating financial service partners for working collaboratively to strengthen financial wellbeing and inclusion across the East Pilbara.



RECOGNITION

CELEBRATING PEOPLE, IMPACT AND INNOVATION



2025 award winner

Principal Solicitor Mark Jeffreys
- Regional Practitioner of the Year,
Law Society of Western Australia.

2026 finalists - announced after year end

- WA Legal Innovation of the Year - Karratha Legal Alliance.
- Community Legal Centre / community law organisation recognition - Pilbara Community Legal Service.
- Pilbara for Purpose Awards - Social Impact: Newman Power Taskforce.
- Pilbara for Purpose Awards - Large Organisation: Pilbara Community Legal Service.
- Pilbara for Purpose Awards - Heart of the Community Sector: Karla Kelly.

These recognitions reflect both the quality of frontline service delivery and PCLS's willingness to develop new responses to the structural challenges facing regional communities.





VALE KAREN GARLETT

During the year, PCLS lost a valued colleague and member of our community, Karen Garlett.

Karen was part of PCLS's Financial Counselling team and contributed to supporting people across the Pilbara through periods of financial hardship and uncertainty. Her work was grounded in the practical, person-to-person support that sits at the heart of community services.

We remember Karen with respect and gratitude for her contribution to PCLS and to the people she supported. We extend our condolences to her family, friends, colleagues and all who knew her.

Karen's place in the PCLS story will be remembered.





PARTNERSHIPS

REGIONAL IMPACT IS BUILT TOGETHER

PCLS's reach and impact depend on strong partnerships with Aboriginal organisations, government, community services, universities, industry, peak bodies and pro bono supporters.

- ➔ Curtin University Tax Clinic
- ➔ UWA / RAJA
- ➔ Royal Life Saving WA
- ➔ K&L Gates, Gilchrist Connell and other pro bono partners - legal and professional support.
- ➔ Community Legal WA
- ➔ Road Safety Commission
- ➔ Department of Communities
- ➔ Department of Housing and Works
- ➔ Department of Social Services
- ➔ Department of Justice
- ➔ BHP
- ➔ FMG
- ➔ Creating Communities
- ➔ FCWA
- ➔ Shire of East Pilbara
- ➔ Department of Local Government, Industry, Regulation and Safety
- ➔ Department of Home Affairs
- ➔ Robe River Kumara RNTBC
- ➔ Karlka Nyiyaparli RNTBC
- ➔ Ashburton Aboriginal Corporation
- ➔ Yindjibarndi Nation Limited

CORPORATE SERVICES

THE SYSTEMS BEHIND FRONTLINE DELIVERY

Corporate Services continued to provide the operational backbone required to deliver services across Karratha, South Hedland, Newman and Roebourne. Administration, travel coordination, facilities, fleet, technology, governance and people systems enabled frontline teams to focus on clients.

A suite of operational manuals and documented procedures was developed to improve consistency, onboarding, succession planning and organisational knowledge. Fleet servicing, maintenance, warranty claims, recalls and vehicle allocation were managed through structured processes to support safe regional travel.



11

FLEET VEHICLES



42

TRAVEL BOOKINGS



48

FLIGHTS COORDINATED



106

ACCOMMODATION
NIGHTS



28

TRAVELLERS
SUPPORTED



17

AVERAGE ICT REQUESTS
PER MONTH (AVAILABLE
2-MONTH PERIOD)



FINANCIAL SERVICES KEY ACHIEVEMENTS



PEOPLE & CULTURE

Improved oversight of employment-related expenditure through detailed budget review and workforce cost analysis. Greater visibility of training and professional development expenditure supported informed planning and continued investment in staff capability.



SERVICE DELIVERY

Delivered timely and relevant financial reporting while working closely with Leadership to identify emerging information and operational needs. Budget planning incorporated travel and outreach costs to ensure appropriate funding was available to support service delivery across the region.



GOVERNANCE & COMPLIANCE

Enhanced monthly financial reporting, with a focus on improving the clarity and accessibility of budget information. Increased financial understanding across leadership to support informed, evidence-based decision-making.



SUSTAINABILITY & GROWTH

Strengthened the long-term financial sustainability of programs through detailed budgeting and proactive cost management, ensuring future operating costs and service delivery requirements were realistically planned and funded.

Financial Overview

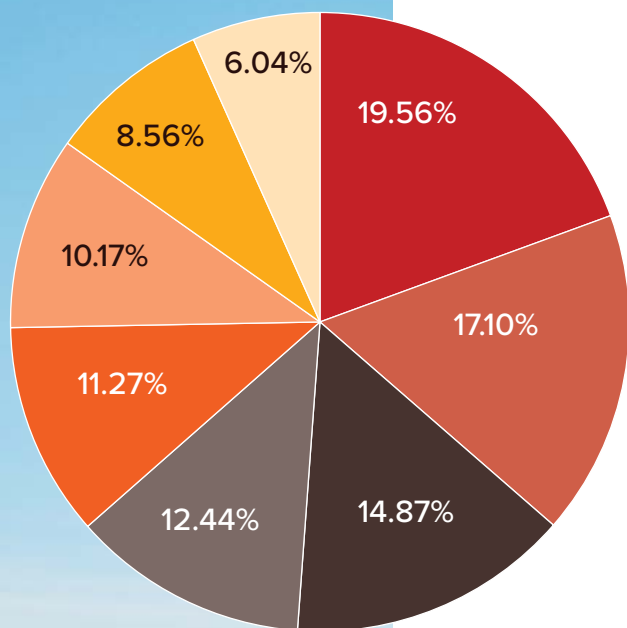
PCLS reported a **\$117,715** surplus for the 2025/26 financial year, primarily attributable to other income and expenditure. All funded programs operated within budget for the period, resulting in a nil operating surplus across program activities. Other income and expenditure included proceeds from the sale of 28 Balmoral Road and investment income.

The 2026/27 Budget indicates that the organisation remains well positioned for sustainable future operations. At 30 June 2026,

PCLS held net assets of **\$4,306,015** and cash and cash equivalents of **\$4,319,950**, of which **\$2,757,976** represented program funding carried forward for the 2026/27 financial year.

All funding agreements and associated expenditure budgets have been reviewed for 2026/27 to ensure ongoing program delivery is appropriately and fully funded. PCLS continues to strategically invest its reserve funds, while own-source revenue is being utilised to improve facilities, strengthen organisational capacity and enhance service delivery.

Total income is **\$5,413,627** and grant funding was **\$5,004,314** comprising:

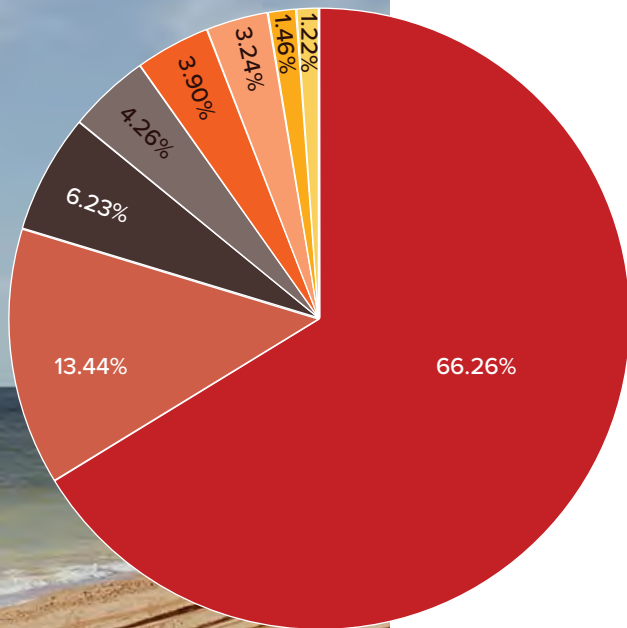


- **DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES**
Financial Counselling Program
\$978,630.90 · 19.56%
- **DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE**
National Access to Justice Partnership
\$855,719.50 · 17.10%
- **DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES**
Housing Support Program
\$744,065.86 · 14.87%
- **DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITIES**
Domestic Violence Programs
\$622,594.94 · 12.44%
- **DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL SERVICE**
Redress Support Services Program
\$564,019.72 · 11.27%
- **DEPARTMENT OF HOME AFFAIRS**
Community Migrant Settlement Program
\$508,797.64 · 10.17%
- **DEPARTMENT OF LOCAL GOVT, SPORT AND CULTURAL INDUSTRIES**
Tenant Advice and Education Program
\$428,136.78 · 8.56%
- **OTHER GRANT AND FUNDING INCOME**
\$302,349.05 · 6.04%

In 2025/26 Small grants were received from:



Total expenditure for the year was **\$5,295,911** comprising:



- **WAGES AND SALARIES**
\$3,509,003.48 · 66.26%
- **OFFICE & ADMINISTRATION COST**
\$711,720.57 · 13.44%
- **RENT AND VARIABLE OUTGOINGS**
\$329,726.89 · 6.23%
- **TRAVEL**
\$225,360.59 · 4.26%
- **PPE DEPRECIATION, REVALUATION & MINOR ASSETS**
\$206,612.96 · 3.90%
- **PROGRAM OPERATING EXPENSES**
\$171,380.39 · 3.24%
- **SERVICES & EVENTS**
\$77,441.96 · 1.46%
- **MOTOR VEHICLES**
\$64,438.97 · 1.22%
- **OTHER EXPENSES**
\$225.82 · 0.00%

Karratha Legal Alliance

Karratha Legal Alliance recorded **\$5,000** in solicitors' fee income for the year ended 30 June 2026, with operating expenditure of **\$65,558**, resulting in a net deficit of **\$60,558** for the period. Expenditure primarily related to staffing, legal and subcontracted services, management support and the systems and infrastructure required to support operations.

At 30 June 2026, Karratha Legal Alliance held total assets of **\$21,365** and net liabilities of **\$60,558**. The financial result reflects the

cost base incurred during the initial operating period ahead of the development of a more established revenue stream.

Looking forward, the focus will be on growing solicitors' fee revenue, managing operating expenditure and developing Karratha Legal Alliance into a financially sustainable commercial legal service that complements the broader activities of Pilbara Community Legal Service.

IN THE MEDIA & PUBLIC VOICE

PCLS continued to use media, public forums and sector networks to advocate for regional communities and to show how place-based service delivery can improve access to justice.

- Launch of **Karratha Legal Alliance** as a purpose-led social enterprise law firm.
- **Advocacy** on regional energy hardship through the Newman Power Taskforce.
- Public **discussion of homelessness** and **housing pressures** affecting Pilbara households.
- Press and TV interviews in the impact on Regional communities with the **Regional courts closing**
- Promotion of family violence prevention through **Love Shouldn't Hurt** and **16 Days in WA**.

- Sharing **regional practice** through conferences, LinkedIn and sector forums.
- **Celebrating** local events, staff achievements, NAIDOC, Elders Birthday and community partnerships.

Digital engagement

PCLS's LinkedIn presence increasingly tells the story behind the data - regional travel, student placements, community events, awards and partnerships - helping stakeholders see both the scale and the people behind the work.

LOOKING FORWARD

FROM A THREE-YEAR STRATEGY TO THE NEXT HORIZON

The close of 2025-26 marks a transition point for PCLS. The organisation has strengthened its service systems, expanded its regional partnerships and demonstrated a growing capacity to influence the systems that shape client outcomes.

The next phase will require the same balance of ambition and discipline: protecting the quality of core services while developing new models that improve sustainability and access.

- Embed **Safe at Home in Karratha** and continue strengthening specialist FDV practice.
- Continue delivery and evaluation of **Love Shouldn't Hurt** and other prevention/ community education initiatives.

- Grow **Karratha Legal Alliance** while maintaining clear governance and social-purpose accountability.
- Continue **place-based advocacy** in Newman and across the Pilbara on cost-of-living, energy and housing pressures.
- Deepen **partnerships with Aboriginal organisations** and progress RAP commitments.
- Strengthen **regional workforce pipelines** through placements, traineeships and professional development.
- Maintain high standards of **governance, cybersecurity, risk management** and **financial oversight**.



Pilbara Community
LEGAL SERVICE

